

Factors Affecting Academic Integrity in Research: Analysis based on Turnitin Similarity Reports of Postgraduate Students of General Sir John Kotelawela Defence University (KDU)

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Abstract

Involving in research activities and presenting in a dissertation form is considered as a pure academic activity. These researches are carried out based on the evidences of previous researches in the same subjects. This type of referring ideas must be properly quoted. Quoting or acknowledging for the previous researches is an activity of scholars for affirming thier new ideas. But some scholars pretend to put others ideas or informations as thier own due to many reasons. Especially, it is very common after the electronic resources came into being. As this is an illegal and unethical activity, scholars are expected to follow scholarly ways to avoid plagiarism. There are many anti-plagiarism softwares introduced to avoid plagiarism. Kotelawala Defence University has subscribed for turnitin to promote rich research culture among academic staff and the students as well. Anyhow students continue to plagiarise for their research activites. Hence, this study intends to show the nature of plagiarism, find the reasons and propose possible ways to avoid it. A mixed research methodoloy was adopted to carry out the study. Sixty six (66) dissertations, submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of Kotelawala Defence University were taken as samples for the study. The importatant plagiarised places in the disserations were revealed and reasons for the plgiarism were found.

Keywords: *Plagiarism, Academic integrity, Similarity level, Turnitin*

Introduction

Researches which are considered as original work of scholars are carried out in higher educational institutions, for fulfilment of degrees or academic durability of capacity existence. However, with the advancement of Information Communication Technology (ICT), the workload, lack of awareness about plagiarism, there is a tendency to plagiarize sometimes even without student's knowledge. Jean Liddell (2003) says that plagiarism makes guilty of students. He argues that "when students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgement of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism". Hence, it is pure journey of researching subjects of area interested or given are of problems.

Earlier days, researchers found problems in finding information for researches and supervisors or knowledge experts were very versatile of sources of information on particular fields. After